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DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

NOFORN-	Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals
NOCONTRACT-	Not Releasable to Contractors or Contractor/Consultants
PROPIN-	Caution-Proprietary Information Involved
ORCON-	Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator
REL...-	This Information has been Authorized for Release to ...

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23 JULY 1982

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**T-72 TANK PRODUCTION
MARTIN, CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

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1. (S/D) SIGNIFICANCE: FIRST CONFIRMATION OF T-72 TANK PRODUCTION OUTSIDE OF THE USSR.
2. (S/D) REMARKS: A T-72 MEDIUM TANK WAS IN THE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AREA AT THE MARTIN ARMORED VEHICLE AND LOCOMOTIVE PLANT TURCIANSKE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA. THE PRESENCE OF THE T-72 TANK AT THE PLANT INDICATES THAT INITIAL PRODUCTION OF THE T-72 HAS BEGUN AT THE PLANT AND THAT FULL-SCALE SERIES PRODUCTION WILL BE UNDERWAY LATER THIS YEAR.

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(S/D) PREVIOUSLY, THE T-55 TANK AND THE MT-55 TANK-LAUNCHED SCISSORS BRIDGE WERE PRODUCED AT MARTIN. T-55 PRODUCTION PROBABLY PEAKED IN THE FALL OF 1980 AND DECLINED SUBSTANTIALLY AFTER THAT. DURING 1981 VERY FEW T-55 TANKS WERE SEEN AT THE PLANT. NO T-55 TANKS HAVE BEEN OBSERVED DURING 1982. THIS FACT, COUPLED WITH THE T-72 SIGHTING, SUGGESTS THAT T-55 PRODUCTION HAS CEASED. SINCE 1981 THE NUMBER OF MT-55 BRIDGE CARRIERS (BASED ON THE T-55 CHASSIS) HAS ALSO DECLINED SUBSTANTIALLY ALTHOUGH THE BRIDGE PORTION OF THE SYSTEM IS STILL SEEN IN SMALL NUMBERS AT THE PLANT AND MAY STILL BE IN PRODUCTION.

(S/D) TWO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS ALSO SUGGEST THAT PRODUCTION OF A NEW TANK HAS STARTED AT MARTIN. SEVERAL LARGE FABRICATION/ASSEMBLY BUILDINGS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN EXTERNALLY COMPLETED AND ARE PROBABLY RELATED TO T-72 PRODUCTION. IN ADDITION, THE TANK TESTING FACILITIES ADJACENT TO THE PLANT ARE UNDERGOING A MAJOR UPGRADING. THESE IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW CONCRETE TEST TRACK, THE UPGRADING OF SEVERAL EXISTING TEST TRACKS, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A POSSIBLE TANK FORDING BASIN.

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Page 2 of 2

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(S/D) ANALYST'S COMMENTS -- THE IMPROVED CAPABILITIES OF THE T-72 OVER THE T-55 WOULD NECESSITATE A REDESIGN AND UPGRADING OF TANK TEST FACILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, THE HIGHER SPEEDS OF THE T-72 WOULD REQUIRE THE BANKING OF TURNS TO A GREATER DEGREE.

(SECRET/SPOKE) IT HAS BEEN REPORTED FROM SEVERAL SOURCES THAT THE T-72 HAS ENTERED SERIES PRODUCTION AT THE MARTIN PLANT. PREPARATIONS FOR PRODUCTION REPORTEDLY BEGAN IN 1979 WITH A GOAL OF ACHIEVING ROUTINE PRODUCTION IN 1982.

(S/D) THE INITIAL PRODUCTION RUN FROM THE PLANT HAS PROBABLY ALREADY BEEN DEPLOYED TO UNITS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAKIAN NATIONAL FORCES. ON SATELLITE IMAGERY DURING MID-MAY 1982 SMALL NUMBERS OF T-72 TANKS WERE SEEN AT KOCOUCOVEC ARMY BARRACKS 1 WHICH HOUSES A TANK REGIMENT SUBORDINATE TO THE 3RD MOTORIZED RIFLE DIVISION OF THE 4TH ARMY.

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(S/D) PRODUCTION OF THE T-72 IS ALSO REPORTEDLY PLANNED AT THE LABEDY STEEL AND TANK MFG PLANT IN POLAND. HOWEVER, AS OF MAY 1982, T-55 PRODUCTION CONTINUED AT LABEDY (NPIC IAC 274 FOR 16 JUNE 1982 ITEM 2). THUS, CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS THE ONLY CONFIRMED PRODUCER OF THE T-72 TANK OUTSIDE OF THE SOVIET UNION. PRODUCTION OF THE T-72 IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE PROBABLY STARTED PRODUCTION OF A NEW TANK MORE ADVANCED IN CAPABILITIES THAN THE T-72. THE SOVIETS SELDOM ALLOW A NEW WEAPONS SYSTEM TO BE LICENSED AND PRODUCED IN ANOTHER COUNTRY UNLESS THEY HAVE AN IMPROVED FOLLOW-ON IN PRODUCTION.

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3. (S) COORDINATES 49-04-04N 018-54-30E
4. (S/SPOKE) COLLATERAL REFERENCES: NSA, MILITARY TRADE -- EVIDENCE OF SOVIET T-72 TANK PRODUCTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA (S/SPOKE)

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(S/D) DIA, DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY, USSR-CZECHOSLOVAKIA: TANK MOBILIZATION (SECRET)

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